



e-Card Will Help Soldiers With Studies

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Fort Monroe, Va.—Soldiers in professional-development courses will soon be given a credit-card-size e-Card to help them with research projects.

The e-Card fits into a computer's CD-ROM drive. When it is inserted, it will automatically show the links to military Web sites and other distance learning resources. When the soldier clicks on the name of the Web site, the connection is made.

"The cards will be given to soldiers attending courses on levels above basic training and AIT [advanced individual training]," said Col. Christopher Olson, Director of Training Development and Analysis Activity for Training and Doctrine Command's Deputy Chief of Staff for Training. Olson oversees the building of The Army Distance Learning Program, for which the e-Card was developed.

When the distance learning system is completed in fiscal 2003, he said there will be 700 classrooms equipped to receive or originate interactive video and computer-based training throughout the network.

Students attending Noncommissioned Officer and Officer Education Systems as well as distance learning courses will be given an e-Card.

Soldiers enrolled in The Army University Online, or eArmyU, are issued computers with the information on the e-Card already loaded.

Soldiers should keep the card they are given, officials said. When soldiers take future courses, they can use it again. If the system has added or deleted Web site links, the card will be automatically updated when it's inserted into a computer CD-ROM drive.

The e-Card is based on similar cards used in industry. On the playing side is a raised circle that fits into the CD recess in the computer's drive. Once the e-Card fits into the recess and the tray is closed, the Web sites on the e-Card are displayed.

The cards currently contain 28 Web sites, but that will increase, according to Jim Wood, information and marketing contractor with Communication Technologies, the company that makes the CD-ROM cards.

"The next iteration will have more than 30 Web sites," Wood said.

Editor's note: Caldwell is a writer for TRADOC News Service. This information is in the public domain at <http://www.dtic.mil/armylink/news>.